

“Three Apples in the Basement”

Written by V C Morrison

FADE-IN: Interior. Security control room in a building.

SFX: Hum of machinery. A random beep now and then.

1 PHIL
[over walkie-talkie for rest of the scene] Hey, Doug.

2 DOUG
What is it, Phil?

3 PHIL
There are three apples in the basement.

4 DOUG
I told you to knock off that spy crap! This ain't Mission: Impossible. You're a security guard!

5 PHIL
No, I'm serious! I'm in the basement. Section B9. There's an old conference room here. And there are three apples on the table. Stacked.

6 DOUG
Hang on. Let me switch cameras... Huh. Look at that.

7 PHIL
Now, I was down here two hours ago. There were no apples here then. Should we report this?

8 DOUG
Report three apples? Nah. It's probably just—hold on.

SFX: FATIMA enters the room.

9 DOUG
Finally! What, were you reading War and Peace in there?

10 FATIMA
Yeah, I just got up to the chapter titled "None of Your Damn Business." What's going on?

11 DOUG
That was pretty cute, Fatima, stacking those apples in the basement like that. Totally threw the new guy off.

12 FATIMA

What apples?

13 DOUG

You didn't just pull a trick on the new guy?

14 FATIMA

Nope.

15 PHIL

Doug?

16 DOUG

[to PHIL] Stand by. [to FATIMA] You had nothing to do with stacking three apples on a conference room table in the past hour or so?

17 FATIMA

Why would I stack apples? Who does that?

18 PHIL

Doug??

19 DOUG

Hang on, Phil!

20 PHIL

There are four apples now!

21 DOUG

What?

22 PHIL

I just...looked away for a second! I looked back, and there's another apple on the stack!

23 FATIMA

What the hell is going on?

24 DOUG

Fatima, hit the lights for section B9. All of 'em.

SFX: Switches flip.

25 PHIL
Whoa! You guys did that, right?

26 DOUG
Yeah. Go ahead and sweep the place. Something weird's going on.

27 PHIL
Alone??

28 DOUG
All the lights are on. What's your problem? We can see you here on the monitors. Do your freakin' job!

29 PHIL
You're just messing with me, right? This is a joke you're pulling on the new guy?

30 DOUG
Phil, make the sweep!

31 PHIL
sigh

POV SWITCH: Scene flips to PHIL. INT: basement.

SFX: Footsteps.

32 DOUG
Fatima's coming down.

33 PHIL
Good! I'm freaking out over here!

34 DOUG
Stop panicking! You got your stun gun, right? You're fine.

35 PHIL
(to himself) I don't feel fine.

SCENE CHANGE: EXT: Night. Urban area.

SFX: Footsteps approach a door. Rachel presses a buzzer.

36 DOUG

[on intercom] Yeah?

37 RACHEL

I'm Dr. Rachel Bernstein from the Grayson Institute. I'm here to fix a vital piece of the building's infrastructure that is need of immediate repair. My name should be on the clearance list.

38 DOUG

You're here to what? Uh...Hang on a minute, Dr. Bernstein. We got a..um..a situation in here.

39 RACHEL

[cautiously, like she suspects something] What kind of situation?

40 DOUG

It's kinda hard to explain.

41 RACHEL

Is there anything strange happening in the basement? Specifically section B9? Strange things appearing?

42 DOUG

How....how did you know?

43 RACHEL

You need to let me in. Immediately.

SCENE CHANGE: BASEMENT

SFX: Elevator doors close.

44 FATIMA

Phil? Where are...oh my God! Where'd all this fruit come from?

45 PHIL

Fatima! There you are! I don't know! They just keep appearing whenever I'm not looking. First apples, then grapes. I don't even know what those are.

46 FATIMA

Starfruit. Hmm.

SFX: FATIMA walks to a pile of starfruit, picks one up.

47 PHIL

What are you doing?

48 FATIMA

[takes a bite] Ugh! [spits out bite of starfruit] That's disgusting!

49 PHIL

Why did you do that? You don't know where these things came from!

50 FATIMA

I wanted to see if it was really a starfruit. Also, I was hungry.

51 PHIL

Is it?

52 FATIMA

No. Not at all. Doesn't even taste like fruit.

53 PHIL

Great. Now what?

54 FATIMA

Well, now we--

SFX: Vines grow violently out of the starfruit. FAT

55 FATIMA

What the--

56 PHIL

Whoa! Did you do that??

57 FATIMA

What? Did I magically make a vine grow out of the not-starfruit? No, Phil. I did not.

58 PHIL
Well, I think you made it angry.

SFX: Vines continue to grow.

59 FATIMA
...Yeah. I think you're right.

SFX: Popping sounds as fruit left and right begin to burst open and grow vines.

60 PHIL
Oh, shit. More vines.

61 FATIMA
Time to go!

62 PHIL
Yeah. To the elevator!

SFX: PHIL and FATIMA run for the elevator. Vines reach out and grab PHIL, knocking him down.

63 PHIL
Oof! Help! It's got me!

64 FATIMA
Phil? Oh, man. Hang on.

SFX: FATIMA whips out her stun gun and stuns the vine holding PHIL.

65 PHIL
[reacts to getting stunned] Ungggsshh!

66 FATIMA
Sorry! Sorry! Damn, it's still moving!

SFX: Vines continue to wrap around PHIL

67 PHIL

[choking sounds]

SFX: Elevator dings. Doors open. RACHEL and DOUG exit. Still the sound of vines growing.

69 RACHEL
Oh my God.

70 DOUG
Hello? Fatima?

72 RACHEL
Where are you?

SFX: RACHEL presses a button on a device. A high-pitched modulated tone starts.
SFX: The vines begin to wither and fall apart.

75 RACHEL
This tone severs the extra-dimensional connection. Temporarily, anyway.
[sees PHIL] My God. I'm too late.

76 DOUG
Oh, no, Phil.

77 FATIMA
Yeah. The vines attacked and...and I couldn't save him.

78 RACHEL
It wasn't your fault.

79 DOUG
What the hell's happening down here, doc?

80 RACHEL
There really isn't time to explain. See that device on the ceiling?

82 DOUG
If that's a camera, there's no connection to the control room.

83 RACHEL
It's not a camera. It's a dimensional field stabilizer. There's a dimensional breach...a hole in time and space, in this building that that device has been keeping closed for 50 years. It just failed.

84 DOUG
I been on this job 16 years. Nobody ever told me nothin' 'bout a
'dimensional field stabilizer.' [under breath] If I'd 'a known, I would've
asked for hazard pay.

85 RACHEL You didn't have clearance to know. Very few people did. Look, bottom line is that it's malfunctioning and needs to be recalibrated for all this to stop. It should have been done years ago when the last iteration of the incursion threatened us but those idiots just wouldn't listen until the breach detection alarm went off because nobody listens to you there unless you have a beard and a...[realizes she's ranting]...never mind.

87 DOUG
There's a ladder against that wall. Help me, FATIMA.

88 RACHEL Hurry! This sonic modulator isn't going to work for too much longer.

SFX: Ladder is acquired and carried to appropriate spot.

89

DOUG

So how do we calibrate this thing, doc?

90

RACHEL

I have to do it. The settings are very...precise.

91

FATIMA

Okay. We'll hold the ladder.

SFX: RACHEL starts climbing. Then hesitates.

92

RACHEL

Oh boy.

93

FATIMA

What's wrong?

94

RACHEL

Nothing! I'm just...not very good with heights.

95

DOUG

Geeze...do you want one of us to do it?

96

RACHEL

No! No. I can handle it. [to herself] just have to breathe, that's all. Just breathe.

SFX: Climbing continues.

SFX: Suddenly there's giggling coming from the walls, seemingly all around them. Light at first, a titter or two here or there.

97

DOUG

Uh..doc?

97

RACHEL

I know! I know! Just hold the ladder!

SFX: Giggling grows.

SFX: RACHEL starts fiddling with the device.

98

RACHEL

[mumbling to herself] Why won't this panel open?? ...there. Oh, no.

100 RACHEL
The circuitry...the incursion has...swallowed it. I can't reach the device to stabilize it! If I had just gotten here sooner--

101 DOUG
[has to raise his voice to be heard over the giggling] Hey! What we do?

102 RACHEL
... I...I'm not sure.

SFX: The vines are back! Surrounding the ladder.

103 DOUG
Gah! No! Doc! You're gonna have to--

104 RACHEL
Uhh..No...no no...[screams, falls off the ladder, has the breath knocked out of her]

SFX: RACHEL falls off the ladder and hits the floor hard.

105 DOUG
DOC!

106 RACHEL
Ah! [sucks in air] My leg!

108 DOUG
[grunts of lifting]

109 RACHEL
[sounds of being in pain as she's lifted from the floor]

SFX: Stumble-running to elevator while vines continue to wake up.

SFX: Running

SFX: A roar like that of a large animal comes from the vicinity of the stairs. The giggling stops. So does the running.

SFX: Elevator button is pushed, doors ding open.

SFX: Running inside. Then frantic pressing of a button.

111 DOUG
Come on. Come on! Go, you frickin' thing!

SFX: EXPLOSION from the stairs! Debris goes flying!
SFX: Loud, echoing footsteps. Or paw steps. Something is approaching.

112 FATIMA
What the hell is that thing?!

113 RACHEL
Don't look directly at it!

SFX: Doors close.

114 DOUG
So, uh, just out of curiosity. What would happen if you looked directly at it?

115 RACHEL
Did you?

116 DOUG
Well...uh...oh no. [garbled throaty sounds. DOUG is changing into...something.]

SFX: Flesh warping, bones snapping.

118 RACHEL
Stay away from him!

119 DOUG
[in a voice that is changing in odd ways and is definitely not his anymore]
THE THIRD DYNASTY OF THE KOTL-SHEE EMPIRE SHALL NOW
BEGIN. BOW BEFORE YOUR NEW MASTERS, WORMS OF THE
EARTH! YOUR LIMBS SHALL BE SEVERED AND YOUR EYES
SEARED AWAY AND YOU WILL CRAWL WITH HAPPINESS INTO THE
MAW OF--

SFX: GUNSHOT!

SFX: Body slumps to the floor.

120 FATIMA
[screams, then] You had a gun??!

SFX: Elevator doors ding open.

121 RACHEL
Your arm is bleeding...

123 RACHEL
[grunts being helped] We need ... to get to the control room.

125 RACHEL
We can't....let it leave this building. We have to stop it.

SFX: Walk/drag down the hallway as they approach the control room.

FADE-OUT

FADE-IN: Interior, control room.

126

RACHEL

Help me to that chair, then roll me over to that wall panel. [grunts as appropriate for being wounded and being helped into an office chair. Use your imagination.]

127

FATIMA

Sure thing. [grunts as appropriate for helping a wounded person into an office chair. Use your imagination.]

SFX: Chair rolls across floor. Buttons are pressed, beeps are made, and a panel opens.

128

FATIMA

That is the scariest big red button I've ever seen. [sharp intake of breath]
Ouch!

129

RACHEL

[suspicious] What's wrong?

130

FATIMA

My arm feels weird. [starts feeling woozy] I don't...I don't feel very good.
No! Wait! Don't!

SFX: Gunshot again! Body falls.

131

RACHEL

[beat, then sighs] I'm sorry. Like I said, we can't let it leave this building.

SFX: The building starts shaking, rumbling. Or maybe it's the air itself.

SFX: RACHEL pulls out a cell phone and dials. Phone calling sounds...then a connection.

132

VOICE

Speak.

133

RACHEL

This is Dr. Bernstein. Code 3652F. [hesitates, then] Solution A.

134

VOICE

[a beat then] Acknowledged. [another beat] Is there...is there anything else you'd like to say before completing solution A.

135

RACHEL

Yeah. Tell Dr. Koch that I told him so. Oh, and that he's a fucking moron.

SFX: RACHEL pushes the Big Red Button.

SFX: EXPLOSION! Bricks flying. Glass breaking. Then...total, unnatural silence. And then...the explosion reverses. The building implodes, sucked into nothingness. Finally, it's all over.

SCENE: Exterior, night.

SFX: Night sounds.

SFX: A giggle from somewhere. Then another. Then more. Giggling grows louder, manic, turns to rounds of maniacal laughter as rumbling begins again...

FADE-OUT